

February 18, 2008

Jane Brackman, Executive Officer
State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind
1625 North Market Boulevard, Suite-202
Sacramento, CA 95834

Mitch Pomerantz
1115 Cordova Street #402
Pasadena, CA 91106

Dear Ms. Brackman:

I am writing to you and the members of the State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind to express my deep concern and disappointment over the Board's decision to select a sighted individual to serve as the new Executive Officer when two qualified blind guide dog handlers were among the final four candidates for the position.

While I am the President of the American Council of the Blind, this letter is being sent by me both as a guide dog handler for over eight years, and as someone with 20 years experience in human resources, including several in the equal employment opportunity arena. Based on my background and experience, unless the sighted candidate chosen was far and away superior to either of the two blind finalists, it seems to me that the Board missed a tremendous opportunity to employ a blind person in a high profile position within our community. It is difficult for me to believe that those making the selection were unaware of this opportunity and unwilling to take this factor into consideration in their decision. While it is unlawful in California to use affirmative action as a criterion when choosing between two equally qualified candidates, it is certainly not inappropriate to recognize the benefit to the Board that selecting a blind person as Executive Officer would have provided.

In closing, I respectfully request that this letter be read at the public meeting of the State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind in March. It is important that comments such as these be part of the public record, given the nature and status of this position and of the Guide Dog Board. Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mitch Pomerantz